

fees shall be stayed pending final disposition of the underlying controversy.

(c) For purposes of this rule, final disposition means the later of (1) the date on which an initial decision or other recommended disposition of the merits of the proceeding by an adjudicative officer or intermediate review board becomes administratively final;

(2) Issuance of an order disposing of any petitions for reconsideration of the Postal Service's final order in the proceeding;

(3) If no petition for reconsideration is filed, the last date on which such a petition could have been filed;

(4) Issuance of a final order or any other final resolution of a proceeding, such as a settlement or voluntary dismissal, which is not subject to a petition for reconsideration;

(5) In proceedings under 39 U.S.C. 3005, on the date that an Administrative Law Judge enters an order indefinitely suspending further proceedings on the basis of a compromise agreement entered into between the parties; or

(6) In proceedings before the Board of Contract Appeals, the Board of Contract Appeals decision on quantum. When the Board decides only entitlement and remands the issue of quantum to the parties, the final disposition occurs when the parties execute an agreement on quantum, or if the parties cannot agree on quantum and resubmit the quantum dispute to the Board, when the Board issues a decision on quantum.

[46 FR 45945, Sept. 16, 1981, as amended at 52 FR 6798, Mar. 5, 1987]

### **Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications**

#### **§ 960.13 Filing and service of documents.**

Any application for an award or other pleading or document related to an application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding, except as provided in § 960.11(b) for confidential financial information.

#### **§ 960.14 Answer to application.**

(a) Within 30 days after service of an application, counsel representing the Postal Service may file an answer to the application. Unless the Postal Service counsel requests an extension of time for filing or files a statement of intent to negotiate under paragraph (b) of this section, failure to file an answer within the 30-day period may be treated as a consent to the award requested.

(b) If the Postal Service counsel and the applicant believe that the issues in the fee application can be settled, they may jointly file a statement of their intent to negotiate a settlement. The filing of this statement shall extend the time for filing an answer for an additional 30 days, and further extensions may be granted by the adjudicative officer upon request by Postal Service counsel and the applicant.

(c) The answer shall explain in detail any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied on in support of the Postal Service's position. If the answer is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, the Postal Service shall include with the answer either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 960.19.

#### **§ 960.15 Reply.**

Within 15 days after service of an answer, the applicant may file a reply. If the reply is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the proceeding, the applicant shall include with the reply either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 960.19.

#### **§ 960.16 Comments by other parties.**

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and Postal Service may file comments on an application within 30 days after it is served or on an answer within 15 days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires such participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comments.